

# THE SPIRITUAL ISSUES OF THE WAR

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## THE UNIFYING FORCES OF EUROPE

On December 19th and 20th, 1944, the House of Lords discussed the following motion, moved by Lord Templewood (formerly Sir Samuel Hoare, till recently His Majesty's Ambassador to Spain), "That the unifying forces of Europe stand in urgent need of strengthening, and in particular that every European citizen should be ensured of certain fundamental rights and liberties without which European civilization cannot continue." The speeches in this debate raised many of the fundamental "spiritual issues" in the present conflict, and we believe that our readers, most of whom do not see "Hansard," will be glad to see them in something like their complete form. Important contributions were made by the Lords Spiritual as well as by Lords Temporal, the Archbishop of York, Archbishop Lord Lang and the Bishop of Chichester speaking on specifically spiritual aspects of the question. Probably there is no other legislative assembly in the world where such a debate could so naturally take place. We propose to give this week a brief summary of Lord Templewood's speech (which covered ground not immediately within the scope of this bulletin) and an almost full account of a speech by Viscount Samuel. Next week we hope to quote some of the episcopal statements.

### Lord Templewood on Fundamental Human Rights

Lord Templewood, basing his remarks on his experiences of the Gestapo in Spain, said, "These experiences have left a very deep impression on me, but worse than these personal incidents was the conviction that this terrible German trail was leaving behind it corruption, leaving behind it bitter hatreds and vendettas, and was steadily undermining all the moral standards of the life into which it in-

stilled its poison. What can we do," the speaker continued, "to re-create these moral values and to re-establish the basis of European civilization which is in such urgent danger?" Lord Templewood then dealt with certain obstacles which had to be surmounted first—for example, the fear of German aggression, the distribution of proper food supplies and the prevention of anarchy. He then stressed the need for guaranteeing to every European certain elementary rights, liberties and safeguards which should avoid racial and religious persecution, and guarantee equal and speedy justice for all in European courts. He proposed the setting up of a permanent international body "making reports and generally helping to raise the moral standard in defence of these rights." He concluded: "I ask you to believe that if once again we are going to create the basis of European civilization, the finest civilization that the world has ever seen, founded on Greek liberty, on Roman order, on Jewish and Christian thought, then these elementary rights are an essential condition of advance. I pray that whatever may be the more detailed provisions of any Peace Treaty in the future, these elementary rights should somehow or other be guaranteed to Europe."

### Lord Samuel on a Spiritual Answer to a Spiritual Problem

Lord Samuel said:

"We have heard a maiden speech comprehensive, closely reasoned and carefully considered. The noble Viscount speaks with the practice of a Parliamentarian of long standing, and with the weight which comes from much reflection. With his diagnosis of the present European situation I feel sure that all must agree. The Continent is suffering from a moral sickness, and what is needed

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above all is, as he says, to re-create moral values and to give to Europe (to use another phrase of his) a real moral backbone. We must indeed find an ethical basis for our politics and our economics. The history of the nineteenth century and of the first half of the twentieth has been marked by three distinct phases of thought. First, through the greater part of the nineteenth century men's minds were concentrated upon political issues, and especially upon constitutional issues—national independence and democratic Constitutions. The great dates here were 1832, the date of the great Reform Bill, and 1848, the year of revolution on the Continent. Great typical names of the nineteenth century were Gladstone, Bright, Barth, Garibaldi and Kossuth, and the names of those who were struggling for liberty in Russia. In the end it seemed as though all the world would obtain democratic Constitutions. Even India was stirring; Turkey and China had their Parliaments, and the world in general believed that once that process was complete there would be peace, liberty and prosperity, and all would be well.

"In the latter part of the nineteenth century, however, there came a conviction that that was not so, and economic questions came to take the foremost place in the minds of great multitudes of people. Attention was concentrated on the evils at the basis of society—poverty, ignorance, unemployment, wretched environment, and so we had the rise of the Labour movement in this country, of Socialism on the Continent, Communism in Russia, the conspicuous figure of Karl Marx, and the theory of the economic interpretation of history, that all history should be valued in terms of economics—the materialist theory. From those great movements large results have been obtained and many things of value, and both the political and the economic movements have undoubtedly been essential. But now in these days we are coming more than ever to realize that neither the one nor the other is enough. We see that the war of 1914 was not the result either of political or of economic considerations. Never was the world so prosperous as at that moment, or more rapidly becoming even more prosperous. Immense changes were being effected in the cure of the evil of social maladjustment. The war came far more from national ambitions than from any other cause, and in 1939, although it is true that the great depression and the ruin of large classes in Continental Europe, and widespread unemployment were among the causes, they were not the causes which made war inevitable. The real cause was

the rise of the Nazi philosophy in Germany with its principle of the *Herrenvolk*, the 'Blood and Soil,' the *Führerprinzip*, indeed the ideas of Nietzsche, who furnished wickedness with a philosophy. The question therefore, is no longer political or economic but in a much greater degree ethical and religious.

### How are results to be achieved?

"Therefore when I come to my noble friend's diagnosis, as I say, I agree wholeheartedly. But the remedy which he propounds appears to me to be once more rather reverting to the political level. He wants to guarantee certain liberties, to make sure that there shall be the reign of law, no arbitrary arrests or imprisonment, no racialism, religious freedom, equal opportunities. It is easy to declare all these purposes, but why should they be accepted and how can we be sure that they will be maintained? He would say, because they are obviously right and just and conduce to the welfare of mankind. Perfectly true, but we are in an age when there are schools of thought that care nothing about rightness or justice or the welfare of human beings, and whose emphasis is laid on action, greatness, power. Those things, and not human welfare, are their aim. If we were to establish all my noble friend's aims and achieve the results he desires, what guarantee is there that they could be maintained against aggressive nationalism, wars or revenge, or revolutionary Communism? What he says in effect is that many of the countries of Europe in this year 1944 have still not obtained what this country secured by Magna Charta in 1215. His purpose is to help or to stimulate all the Continental countries after so many centuries to obtain a Magna Charta of their own, and then he would establish a permanent international organization to promote and propagate that idea and to watch over its development.

"As to his concrete proposals, I would make one observation. In his last words he invited us to criticize. While I accept, of course, wholeheartedly his aims as being right and proper and excellent, there is this one word of caution that it would be necessary to utter before accepting wholeheartedly what is *prima facie* so right and proper. I am not sure that his new charter would not prove to be a charter for subversive revolutionaries. Now revolutionaries are of all types. They may be the friends of liberty who have been struggling to overthrow tyranny, as those great men whose names I have mentioned did in 1848; or they may be the agents of tyranny who are striving to



overthrow democracy. We cannot be sure when this war is over and Germany is defeated that there will not be attempts made to re-establish the Nazi ideas in power. Some time after this tremendous storm there is likely to be a ground swell over the ocean, and you may have all kinds of movements, possibly violent movements, to try to upset the settlements that have been arrived at.

"Now experience of recent years has shown that democracies are very easily overthrown. They went down one after the other all over the continent of Europe. And they were easily overthrown largely because of their own attachment to the principles of liberty. A Hitler comes forward and says: 'I believe in violence, I believe in organizing a riot, a Putsch, a revolution, you on the other hand believe in freedom, liberty, free speech, in no arbitrary arrest, no imprisonment without trial in accordance with the law, and conviction for a definite offence. How do you dare, you democrats, to stop me in my agitation? You are being traitors to your own principles.' And so you found over a large part of Europe that these subversive movements went forward. . . .

"Here in this country on various occasions of crisis it has been necessary to suspend the Habeas Corpus Act, and our Regulation 18B at the present time would certainly not conform, I am afraid, to any of the principles that the noble Viscount has lately been advocating. Indian revolutionary movements in Bengal, accompanied by assassination, have had to be suppressed by some arbitrary measures; and at this moment in Palestine, where shocking crimes have been committed by terrorists and where no evidence can be obtained against individuals, it has been indispensable to take somewhat arbitrary measures to arrest suspects and to confine them under restraint. If all restraints are abolished by a general principle which is to be maintained by means of an international organization we might find that in the Balkans and other countries Europe had become ungovernable. . . .

"Consequently, while I do not venture this criticism and these suggestions as in any way detracting from the truth and value of the suggestions of the noble Lord, I only wish to invite your Lordships to consider before consenting straight away to the principle of the establishment of an international authority of this sort, and to see how far realities would compel the limitation or qualification of the general principle which he has advocated. . . .

"But my main criticism of the noble Viscount is that while his arguments lead to the conclusion that it is a moral reform that

is needed, his conclusion is that political measures, the adoption everywhere of the principles of our own Magna Charta and Bill of Rights should be established. The political, the economic and the ethical all affect one another. He has pointed out that to make these changes in the direction of liberty is a preliminary to some moral revival. Well it might be, or it might not, and I do not know that it is really necessarily essential to a moral revival; but those three factors, the political, the economic and the ethical, must affect one another in some degree. We have read the late Mr. Wendell Wilkie's admirable book *One World*. It is one world not only in a geographical sense but also because all human activities affect one another. We cannot divide these subjects into compartments, putting religion into one, politics into another and commerce and industry into a third. They must all affect one another.

### The need for an Ethical Revival

"But while my noble friend has, as I say, diagnosed a moral sickness, he advocates a political cure. To my mind—as I have intimated briefly in speeches in this House on previous occasions and very frequently outside this House—we must at this stage in the history of Europe set ourselves to bring in the spiritual forces; and not only that vague religion of humanity which does, in fact, in the modern world, to a great degree govern men's minds and influence their actions, but also the great organized religions. However, there we come to the fact that while these political, economic and ethical trends of thought have become manifest during the last century and a half, there has been another which has proved in some respects even more powerful, and that is the scientific. The development of science has revolutionized man's ideas on the universe and the Deity, and when we came to invoke the aid of the organized religions we find—and it is only frank to recognize the fact which is in all men's knowledge—that all the faiths, Western and Eastern alike, have closely intertwined their ethical precepts with ancient theological dogmas which are, to a large degree, unacceptable in the modern world; and thereby their influence has been greatly weakened.

"Yet they still have great power and even greater possibilities for the future; and I ask leave of your Lordships to call your attention to a movement which has recently been taking shape in America—in some respects the most lively country in the world intellectually at the present time. In America, in October, 1943, a three-faith declaration was issued over the signatures of about one



hundred and forty of the leaders of the Protestant, Catholic and Jewish faiths, which has attracted great attention there and elsewhere. Perhaps your Lordships would allow me to read the Protestant Preamble to this declaration of faith, because to my mind this touches the very essence of the whole of the human situation. Each faith had its own Preamble and they all agreed on seven points. This is the Protestant Preamble:

"A world troubled almost to despair by the tragedy of recurrent war looks to the forces of religion for leadership. The Protestant Churches, responsive to that appeal, have already sought to show how the practical implications of their faith should guide the relations of nations. The conclusions to which they have come are in many important respects similar to those of men whose religious heritage differs from our own. In this we rejoice, for world order cannot be achieved without the co-operation of all men of good will. We appeal to our constituency to give heed to the following principles, enunciated in common by Protestants, Catholics and Jews, which must find expression in political policies if they are to establish a just and durable peace. Beyond this statement of principles, we hold that the ultimate foundations of peace require spiritual regeneration as emphasized in the Christian Gospel."

"The Catholics and the Jews also have their Preambles to a document which advocates seven points, which are more closely argued in the paragraphs but of which the headings are these: 'The moral law must govern world order'; 'the rights of the individual must be assured'; 'the rights of oppressed, weak or Colonial peoples must be protected'; 'the rights of minorities must be secured'; 'international institutions to maintain peace with justice must be organized'; 'international economic co-operation must be developed'; and 'a just social order within each State must be achieved.' A few months afterwards the Council of Christians and Jews in Great Britain issued a statement welcoming the declaration in May of this year. I would remind your Lordships that the Presidents of that organization were the late Archbishop of Canterbury, whose loss we so deeply deplore, the Catholic Archbishop of Westminster, the Moderator of the Church of Scotland, the Moderator of the Free Church Council and the Chief Rabbi. That Council of Christians and Jews in Great Britain stated that it warmly welcomed the statement on the conditions of world peace signed by the Protestant, Roman Catholic and Jewish religious leaders in America on October 7th, 1943, and found itself in general agreement with the principles therein laid down.

"There follows further elaboration. The World Congress is now engaged in inviting the adhesion of religions in other countries of Europe and in the countries in the Far

East. This matter is, I fully recognize, outside the scope of a Legislative Assembly such as your Lordships' House to consider in any detail, yet I venture to draw your Lordships' attention to it because it is there, and on those lines, that we shall really get the answer to the question posed by the noble Viscount who has opened this debate. Valuable as the diffusion of the principles of Magna Charta may be, there is needed something more fundamental, more universal, more transcendent, if we are to create the right atmosphere in which the world's statesmen may meet after the war to frame a better order for Europe and for mankind."

## ARCHBISHOP OF ATHENS' APPEAL TO GREEK PEOPLE

The Archbishop of Athens, Mgr. Damaskinos, in a Christmas message to the Greek people, has made a fervent appeal to the Greeks to stop the present struggles. The following is taken from the message:—

"Never before, since Greece became a free State, has the great day of the birth of our Saviour, Christ, dawned in the midst of so much agony, affliction and suffering as today. For now by the blessing of God and with the help of our great allies we have shaken off the crushing yoke of slavery. Instead of filling the earth with hymns and psalms of thanksgiving to the God of Peace and Love who appeared in Bethlehem, we hear the demoniac bursts of explosives and the heavy firing of the Greeks at war among themselves.

"Instead of devoting ourselves, free again and all united, to rebuilding the ruins of our national life, we have been carried away into a revolutionary upheaval which in the end can only bring harm to our martyred Greece.

"My heart is rent when I see the frightful depths to which we are descending. My throat is choked when I think of the mass of hatred accumulating between brothers, and of how we are in danger of losing all the moral gain of four years' struggle at the side of our allies. But it is in that struggle precisely that duty calls us to endure, indissolubly united, because it is a struggle to secure the principles of justice and the liberties of the people.

"Only in the complete realization of that struggle can we find also the justification of our own sacrifices for liberty. But true liberty proclaims as unacceptable all arbitrary action, all exemption from the law, no matter by whom or for whom.

"In the name of the tortured Christ, who stands above parties and political strife, I adjure the revolutionaries to obey His voice."